

# Sta of Utah DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES Division of Oil, Gas & Mining

MICHAEL R. STYLER Executive Director JOHN R. BAZA Division Director

# Inspection Report Minerals Regulatory Program

Report Date: August 9, 2006

Supervisor Delt

| Mine Name: Point of the Mountain    | Permit number: M0350026        |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Operator Name: Geneva Rock Products | Inspection Date: July 20, 2006 |
|                                     | Time: About 9:00-11:30 AM      |

**Inspector(s):** Paul Baker and Doug Jensen

Other Participants: Tony Christofferson (Geneva) and Jenny Mahoney

Mine Status: Active Weather: Mostly clear, 80s

| <b>Elements of Inspection</b>                             | Evaluated              | Comment                | Enforcement |
|---|------------------------|------------------------|-------------|
| 1. Permits, Revisions, Transfer, Bonds                    |                        |                        |             |
| 2. Public Safety (shafts, adits, trash, signs, highwalls) |                        |                        |             |
| 3. Protection of Drainages / Erosion Control              |                        |                        |             |
| 4. Deleterious Material                                   |                        |                        |             |
| 5. Roads (maintenance, surfacing, dust control, safety)   |                        |                        |             |
| 6. Concurrent Reclamation                                 |                        |                        |             |
| 7. Backfilling/Grading (trenches, pits, roads,            |                        |                        |             |
| highwalls, shafts, drill holes)                           |                        |                        |             |
| 8. Water Impoundments                                     |                        |                        |             |
| 9. Soils  |                        |                        |             |
| 10. Revegetation  | $\overline{\boxtimes}$ | $\overline{\boxtimes}$ |             |
| 11. Air Quality   |                        |                        |             |
| 12. Other   |                        |                        |             |
|   |                        |                        |             |

## **Purpose of Inspection:**

The purpose of the inspection was to see whether a reclaimed area above the mine would make a suitable revegetation success standard or if it would be better to use an undisturbed area as the standard.

## **Inspection Summary:**

#### 10. Revegetation

We looked at vegetation in three areas, a north-facing undisturbed area, a south-facing undisturbed area, and a revegetated area above the mine. Vegetation on the north-facing slope includes bulbous bluegrass, big sage, purple three awn, bluebunch wheatgrass, snakeweed, Louisiana sage, toadflax, sand dropseed, and six weeks fescue. I was surprised to not see any cheatgrass in this area. I estimated cover from perennial species to be about 30 percent. This is simply a gross estimate and not a measurement.

The south-facing slope is quite different. While big sage is present, it is not nearly as abundant. Cheatgrass is the dominant species. Other common species include toadflax, six weeks fescue, bulbous bluegrass, gumweed, moth mullein, snakeweed, purple three awn, sand dropseed, and goldenweed. Cover from perennial species is about 10-15 percent.

Greater than 95 percent of the vegetation in the reclaimed area is from weedy species, but several seeded species are represented in the area, mostly by one or two plants. The most common species include cheatgrass, gumweed, ragweed, tumblemustard, goldenweed, and peppergrass. Other species

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present, mostly as individual plants, include musk thistle, pallid evening primrose, blanketflower, crested wheatgrass, bee plant, either western or thickspike wheatgrass, cicer milkvetch, and blue flax.

#### **Conclusions and Recommendations:**

The revegetated area is not suitable as a revegetation success standard. Although the undisturbed areas are not ideal vegetation communities, they represent the premining vegetation. This is what the rules say should be sampled.

The operator should try to control the musk thistle and needs to be sure it does not spread through the reclaimed area or into the mine site.

The operator asked for seed mix recommendations. The mix used in the past is very diverse and contains several adapted species, but many of them would not provide significant cover. I recommend that the mix include bluebunch wheatgrass, purple three awn, sand dropseed, a small amount (perhaps one pound PLS/acre) of crested wheatgrass, big sage, Palmer penstemon, and blue flax.

Inspector's Signature Paul Baker Date: 8/16/06

PBB:pb

Tony Christofferson, Geneva cc:

Linda Matthews, JBR

Attachment: Photos

## **ATTACHMENT**

## **Photographs**

M0350026, Point of the Mountain, Geneva Rock Products

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Photo 1. North-facing hillside. Vegetation is mostly sagebrush and perennial grasses with a lot of bulbous bluegrass.



Photo 2. Another view of the north-facing slope.



Photo 3. The south-facing slope.



Photo 4. Another view of the south-facing slope. Dominant plants include purple three-awn, cheatgrass, and toadflax.

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Photo 5. Another view of the south-facing slope.



Photo 6. The revegetated area above the mine. Most of the green plants are gumweed with some goldenweed (*Heterotheca villosa*) and ragweed. Other dominant plants include cheatgrass, tumblemustard, and bulbous bluegrass.